

SATO et al.  
Serial No. 09/855,547

Atty Dkt: 914-129  
Art Unit: 2173

### REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reexamination of the captioned application is respectfully requested.

#### **A. SUMMARY OF THIS AMENDMENT**

By the current amendment, Applicants basically:

1. Cancel claims 4, 10 and 16 without prejudice or disclaimer.
2. Add new claims 19-22.
3. Respectfully traverse all prior art rejections.

#### **B. PATENTABILITY OF THE CLAIMS**

Claims 1-3, 7-9 and 13-15 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,369,821 to Merrill et al. Claims 5, 6, 11, 12, 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,369,821 to Merrill et al and U.S. Patent 6,637,029 to Maissel et al. All prior art rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

As explained in the previous amendment, Claim 1 is directed to an agent display apparatus displaying a personified agent for making the agent selectively perform a process. In the embodiment illustrated in Fig. 3, the apparatus comprises a first interface (1) for controlling display of the agent and for inputting a request from a user; a second interface (2) for controlling an application program; an action script storing portion (5) for storing an action script describing a procedure of controlling the first interface and the second interface; a searching portion (4) for searching in the action script storing portion for the action script. The searching portion (4) searches for the action script in accordance with the request input from the first interface. The action script searched for follows the described procedure. The first interface controls display of the agent to start the application program. An executing portion controls (3) the application program through the second interface.

SATO et al.  
Serial No. 09/855,547

Atty Dkt: 914-129  
Art Unit: 2173

U.S. Patent 6,369,821 to Merrill et al essentially pertains to a method for synchronizing (scripted) animations, and can be implemented in an animation server 100 (see Fig. 3) which controls playback of animation, and one or more clients 102- 106, which request animation services from server 100. Merrill displays an animated character 60 (see Fig. 2) in a windowing environment which includes a shall 62 of the operating system and windows 64, 66 associated with currently running application programs (see col. 4, lines 26+).

The office action apparently alleges that the claimed first interface is taught at col. 2, lines 39 – 42, which state: "Using the events supported in the animation system, an application can program the system to notify it about the progress of an animation or about input from the user. This feature enables applications to synchronize actions of characters in response to events". This passage seems consistent with the remainder of the col. 2 portion of Merrill's summary, which stresses directive, not responsive, activity by the application.

The office action points to col. 5, lines 39 - 42 as supposedly teaching the claimed second interface for controlling an application program. But such is not the case: application programs on the clients 102-106 instead control the animation server 100. Applicants do not see any teaching of coordinated control of an application program (for operating an external appliance) and a personified agent, nor does the personified agent serve to report operations affecting the external apparatus. In this regard, see col. 2, lines 10 – 26.

New independent claim 19 is more specifically directed to coordinated control of a personified agent and an application program which operates in conjunction with an (external) audio/visual appliance. Limitations of new independent claim 19 and claims dependent thereon are not taught or suggested by the applied references of record.

SATO et al.  
Serial No. 09/855,547

Atty Dkt: 914-129  
Art Unit: 2173

### C. MISCELLANEOUS

In view of the foregoing and other considerations, Applicants request that all prior art rejections be withdrawn and urge that all claims are deemed in condition for allowance. A formal indication of allowability is earnestly solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge the undersigned's deposit account #14-1140 in whatever amount is necessary for entry of these papers and the continued pendency of the captioned application.

Should the Examiner feel that an interview with the undersigned would facilitate allowance of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,  
**NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.**

By: H. Warren Burnam, Jr.  
H. Warren Burnam, Jr.  
Reg. No. 29,366

HWB:ish  
1100 North Glebe Road, 8th Floor  
Arlington, VA 22201-4714  
Telephone: (703) 816-4000  
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100